

Matilda wormwood case essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA MRS.

PHELPS It's a funny thing about mothers and fathers. Even when their own child is the most disgusting little blister you could ever imagine, they still think that he or she is wonderful. Some parents go further. They become so blinded by adoration they manage to convince themselves their child has qualities of genius. Well, there is nothing very wrong with all this. It's the way of the world.

It is only when the parents begin telling us about the brilliance of their own revolting offspring, that we start shouting, 'Bring us a basin! We're going to be sick! School teachers suffer a good deal from having to listen to this sort of twaddle from proud parents, but they usually get their own back when the time comes to write the end-of-term reports. If I were a teacher I would cook up some real scorches for the children of doting parents. 'Your son Maximilian,' I would write, 'is a total wash-out. I hope you have a family business you can push him into when he leaves school because he sure as heck won't get a job anywhere else.

'Or if I were feeling lyrical that day, I might write, 'It is a curious truth that grasshoppers have their hearing-organs in the sides of the abdomen. Your daughter Vanessa, judging by what she's learnt this term, has no hearing-organs at all. 'I might even delve deeper into natural history and say, 'The periodical cicada spends six years as a grub underground, and no more than six days as a free creature of sunlight and air. Your son Wilfred has spent six years as a grub in this school and we are still waiting for him to emerge from the chrysalis. 'A particularly poisonous little girl might sting me into saying, '

Fiona has the same glacial beauty as an iceberg, but unlike the iceberg she has absolutely nothing below the surface.

I think I might enjoy writing end-of-term reports for the stinkers in my class. But enough of that. We have to get on. ACT ONE SCENE ONE 1: MIRACLE: SONG HORTENSIA My mummy says I'm a miracle! ERIC My daddy says I'm his special little guy! Ow! AMANDA I am a princess! BRUCE And I am a prince.

ALL GIRLS Mum says I'm an angel sent down from the sky! ERIC, NIGEL, and BRUCE My daddy says I'm his special little soldier. No one is as handsome, strong as me. BRUCE It's true he indulges my tendency to bulge. ERIC, NIGEL, and BRUCE But I'm his little soldier.

Hup, two, four, free. ALICE and HORTENSIA My mummy says I'm a miracle, One look at my face and it's plain to see. Ever since the day doc chopped the umbilical cord, It's been clear there's no peer for a miracle like me. Ow! NIGEL, BRUCE My daddy says I'm his special little soldier.

No one is as bold or tough as me. Has my daddy told ya One day when I'm older, I can be a soldier NIGEL And shoot you in the face! A party entertainer enters with balloons. PARTY ENTERTAINER One can hardly move for beauty and brilliance these days. It seems that there are millions of these "one in a millions" these days.

Specialness is de rigueur. Above average is average. Go fig-ueur! Is it some modern miracle of calculus That such frequent miracles don't render each

one un-miraculous? CHILDREN My mummy says I'm a miracle. One look at my face and it's plain to see.

Ever since the day doc chopped the umbilical cord, It's been clear there's no peer for a miracle like me. LAVENDER My mummy says I'm a precious barrelina. She has never seen – a! Prettier barrelin-a! She says if I'm keen, I have to cut down on the cream, But I'm a barrelina – So give me more cake! Four COUPLES, crouched down behind the table, begin to stand and speak. COUPLE 1 MAN: Take another picture of our angel from this angle over here. WOMAN: She is clearly more emotionally developed than her peers.

BOTH: What a dear! COUPLE 2 WOMAN: That's right, honey. Look at mummy. MAN: Don't put honey on your brother. WOMAN: Smile for mummy! Smile for mother! MAN: I think he blinked. WOMAN: Well, take another! COUPLE 3 MAN: Have you seen his school report? He got a C on his report! ALL COUPLES: What? MAN: We'll have to change his school. The teacher's clearly falling short.

COUPLE 4 WOMAN: She's just delightful. MAN: So hilarious. WOMAN: And insightful. COUPLES Might she be a little brighter than her class? Oh, yes, she's definitely advanced! The couples and the children overlap the next two verses, as children split themselves among five couples and execute rote choreography.

[COUPLES Take another picture of our angel from this angle over here. She is clearly more emotionally developed than her peers. What a dear! That's right, honey, look at mummy. Don't put honey on your brother. Smile for mummy, smile for mother.

I think he blinked. Well, take another! CHILDREN My mummy says I'm a miracle. One look at my face and it's plain to see. Ever since the day doc chopped the umbilical cord, It's been clear there's no peer for a miracle like me.

] CHILDREN My mummy says I'm a – CHILDREN and COUPLES Miracle!
CHILDREN That I'm as tiny and as shiny as a – CHILDREN and COUPLES Mirror ball!
CHILDREN You can be all cynical, But it's a truth empirical.
There's never been a miracle, a miracle, a miracle As me. MRS. WORMWOOD
Look, is this going to take much longer Doctor? I got a plane to catch at three.

I'm competing in the Bi-annual International Amateur Salsa and Ballroom Dancing Championships in Paris. DOCTOR You're getting on a plane Mrs. Wormwood? MRS. WORMWOOD Oh yeah.

I've been training four hours a day for the last two years, and I can tell you one thing – if Jennifer Lyttleton thinks she's walking off with the coveted Golden Shoe this year, she's got another thing coming! DOCTOR Ok... MRS. WORMWOOD I've got a secret weapon – Rudolpho. He's part Italian you know. Very subtle and he has incredible upper body strength.

DOCTOR I think we should have a talk. MRS. WORMWOOD So, what is it? What's wrong with me? DOCTOR Mrs. Wormwood, you really have no idea? MRS.

WORMWOOD Wind? DOCTOR Mrs. Wormwood I would like you to think very carefully. What do you think might be the cause of this? MRS. WORMWOOD ... Am I... [chuckles]... Am I? Oh look, am I fat? DOCTOR Mrs.

Wormwood, you're pregnant. MRS. WORMWOOD WHAT!?! DOCTOR You're going to have a baby! MRS. WORMWOOD But I've got a baby, I don't want another one! Isn't there something you can do? DOCTOR You're nine months pregnant. MRS. WORMWOOD Antibiotics or... OH MY GOOD LORD! What about the Bi-annual International Amateur Salsa and Ballroom Dancing Championships!? DOCTOR A baby Mrs.

Wormwood, a child, the most precious gift the natural world can bestow upon us has been handed to you. A brand new human being, a life, a person. A wonderful new person is about to come into your life and bring you love and magic and happiness and wonder. DOCTOR EVERY LIFE I BRING INTO THIS WORLD RESTORES MY FAITH IN HUMANKIND.

DOCTOR EACH NEW-BORN LIFE, A CANVAS YET UNPAINTED... THIS STILL UNBROKEN SKIN... THIS UNCORRUPTED MIND... EVERY LIFE IS UNBELIEAVBLY UNLIKELY. THE CHANCES OF EXISTENCE, ALMOST INFINITELY SMALL. THE MOST COMMON THING IN LIFE IS LIFE, [Baby cries] DOCTOR AND YET EVERY SINGLE LIFE, EVERY NEW LIFE IS A MIRACLE! MIRACLE! [Enter MR. WORMWOOD] MR.

WORMWOOD Where is he? Where's my son? MRS. WORMWOOD Who won? Was it Jennifer Lyttleton? Maybe I could get a later flight or something...? DOCTOR Mrs. Wormwood, please stay where you are... as I keep telling you, you are in no condition to dance the tarantella. MR. WORMWOOD Oh my

word, he's an ugly little fella, ain't he? DOCTOR This is one of the most beautiful children I've ever seen.

MR. WORMWOOD Yeah, well you need glasses mate... he looks like a prune.

DOCTOR Mr. Wormwood the child is a girl! A GIRL! A beautiful, beautiful little girl! MRS.

WORMWOOD Is there still time for the Bi-annual Interchampions Amateur Sausage and Ballroom Dancing... MR. WORMWOOD The competition's over. Ere Doctor I don't suppose we could exchange him for a boy could we? MRS. WORMWOOD This is the worst day of my life! MATILDA MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A LOUSY LITTLE WORM. MY DADDY SAYS I'M A BORE.

MY MUMMY SAYS I'M A JUMPED-UP LITTLE GERM. THAT KIDS LIKE ME SHOULD BE AGAINST THE LAW. MY DADDY SAYS I SHOULD LEARN TO SHUT MY PIE HOLE. NO ONE LIKES A SMART-MOUTHED GIRL LIKE ME MUM SAYS I'M A GOOD CASE FOR POPULATION CONTROL DAD SAYS I SHOULD WATCH MORE TV. SCENE TWO MR. WORMWOOD Yes Sir, that's right Sir.

One hundred and fifty-five brand new luxury cars Sir. Are they good runners? Lets put it this way – you wouldn't beat them in a race. MR. WORMWOOD They ARE good runners sir.

Indeed sir. Sir how much exactly... [Enter Mrs. WORMWOOD] MRS.

WORMWOOD HAAAAARRRRRRYYYYY! MR.

WORMWOOD Hang on a sec... MRS. WORMWOOD Look at this! She's reading a book! That's not normal for a five-year-old. I think she might be an idiot.

MATILDA Listen to this: It was best of times, it was the worst of times, it was an age of wisdom... MR.

WORMWOOD Will you stop scaring your mother with that book boy?!

MATILDA I'm a girl! MRS. WORMWOOD She keeps trying to tell me stories, Harry. I mean, who wants stories? I tell ya' it's not normal for a girl to be all...

MR. WORMWOOD I'm gonna call you straight back, sir! (To Mrs. Wormwood and Matilda) Will you please SHUT UP?! I'm trying to land the biggest deal of my life and I've got to listen to this! And it's your fault! You spend money like water, and expect me to get us out of it.

What am I? A flaming escapologist!? MRS. WORMWOOD Escapologist he says. What about me then? I got a whole house to look after. Dinners don't microwave themselves you know. If you're an escapologist, I must be an acrobat to balance that lot.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST ACROBAT! I'm off to bleach my roots and I shan't be talking to you for the rest of the evening. You horrid little man. MR.

WORMWOOD I'm going to make us rich! MRS.

WORMWOOD RICH?! How rich? MR. WORMWOOD Very rich. Russian businessmen – very, very stupid. Your genius husband is gonna sell them a hundred and fifty five knackered old bangers as brand new luxury cars.

MATILDA But that's not fair! The cars will break down.

What about the Russians? MR. WORMWOOD Gah! Listen to the boy. MATILDA I'm a girl! MR. WORMWOOD Fair does not get you anywhere you thickity-

twit-brain! All I can say is thank goodness Michael has inherited some of his father's brains, eh son? MRS.

WORMWOOD Yeah. Well I shall take the money when you earn it and I shall spend it. But I shan't enjoy it because of the despicable way in which you have spoken to me tonight. [MRS. WORMWOOD exits] MR. WORMWOOD Oh no I... I... [To Matilda] This is your fault.

With your stupid books and your stupid reading! MATILDA What? But I didn't do anything. That not right. MR. WORMWOOD Right?! Right... [laughs to himself] I tell you something you are starting school in a few days time and you will not be getting 'right' there. Oh no.

I know your headmistress – Agatha Trunchbull. And I've told her all about you and your smarty-pants ideas. Great big strong scary woman she is. Yeah used to compete in the Olympics – throwing the hammer! Just imagine what she's going to do to a horrible squeaky little goblin like you, boy! MATILDA I'm a girl! MR. WORMWOOD Get off to bed you nasty little bookworm! [Exit MATILDA.

) SCENE THREE MATILDA NAUGHTY: SONG MATILDA Jack and Jill went up the hill To fetch a pail of water. So they say. The subsequent fall was inevitable. They never stood a chance.

They were written that way: Innocent victims of their story. Like Romeo and Juliet, 'Twas written in the stars before they even met. That love and fate and a touch of stupidity would rob them of their hope of living happily. The endings are often a little bit gory! I wonder why they didn't just change their

story. We're told we have to do what we're told, but surely, Sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty! Just because you find that life's not fair, it Doesn't mean that you just have to grin and bear it. If you always take it on the chin and wear it, Nothing will change.

Even if you're little, you can do a lot. You Mustn't let a little thing like " little" stop you. If you sit around and let them get on top, you Might as well be saying you think that it's okay, And that's not right. She flicks on the light of the vanity in her parent's bathroom, which has risen from the stage. It is delineated into " His" and " Hers" sides.

] And if it's not right, You have to put it right. MATILDA picks up various bottles from the vanity and reads from their labels. Platinum blonde hair dye. Extra strong. Keep out of reach of children.

Hmm. Oil of Violets hair tonic. For men. Yep! MATILDA starts pouring the hair dye into the Oil of Violets bottle. MATILDA In the slip of a bolt, there's a tiny revolt. The seed of a war in the creak of a floorboard.

A storm can begin with the flap of a wing. The tiniest mite packs the mightiest sting. Every day starts with the tick of a clock. All escapes start with the click of a lock. If you're stuck in your story and want to get out, You don't have to cry, you don't have to shout - ' Cause if you're little, you can do a lot.

You Mustn't let a little thing like " little" stop you. If you sit around and let them get on top, you Won't change a thing. Just because you find that life's not fair, it Doesn't mean that you just have to grin and bear it. If you always

take it on the chin and wear it, You might as well be saying you think that it's okay, And that's not right. And if it's not right, You have to put it right . .

[She re-enters her bedroom and jumps onto the bed.] But nobody else is gonna put it right for me. Nobody but me is gonna change my story.

Sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty! SCENE FOUR [The bathroom. Enter MR.

WORMWOOD and MICHAEL] MR. WORMWOOD In business son, a man's hair is his greatest asset. Good hair means good brain. The secret to my success in business... MICHAEL Secret! MR. WORMWOOD Yeah, the secret to my success is Oil of Violet Hair Tonic for men.

Stand back son, your old man is going to work. [MR. WORMWOOD applies the hair tonic and rubs his hair with a towel] Oh yeah, that's the stuff! Boooyah! Ooh yeah that is good that is! That's the bananas! [MR. WORMWOOD removes the towel to reveal that his hair is green] Let me tell you something son.

A man in business cannot fail to get noticed when he looks like this. MICHAEL Secret! MR. WORMWOOD Yeah, secret, yeah [Enter MRS. WORMWOOD] MRS. WORMWOOD OWWWWW! Your hair! It's... It's Green! MR.

WORMWOOD [MR. WORMWOOD looks at himself in the mirror] My hair! It... It's... It's Green! [Enter MATILDA] MRS. WORMWOOD What on earth did you do that for? Why do you want green hair? MR. WORMWOOD I don't want green hair.

MATILDA Maybe you used some of mummy's peroxide y mistake. MRS.

WORMWOOD That's exactly what you've done you stupid man! MR.

WORMWOOD My hair! My lovely hair! Oh my good lord, I've got my big deal

today with the Russians! What am I going to do? MATILDA I know, I know

what we could do! MR. WORMWOOD Tell me, tell me please what can I do?

MATILDA You could pretend you're an elf! MR.

WORMWOOD Yes! That's it! I'll pretend I'm an elfffffff... What did you tell me

that for? The boy's a loon! [Exit MR. WORMWOOD and MICHAEL] MATILDA

Mum, would you like to hear a story? MRS. WORMWOOD Don't be disgusting!

Go on, creep back to that library of yours or something. The sooner you are

locked up in school, the better.

[Exit MATILDA and MRS. WORMWOOD] SCENE FIVE [The library. Enter MRS.

PHELPS, and MATILDA. MISS HONEY is browsing the books at the back.]

MRS.

PHELPS Oh Matilda! What a pleasure to see you. Keeping you from home are

we? MATILDA Yes, I mean mum wanted me to stay home with her. She hates

it when I go out. She misses me so much. Dad too, he loves having me

around. But I think it's good for grown-ups to have their own space.

[MRS. PHELPS chuckles to herself] MRS. PHELPS Your parents must be so

proud to have a girl as clever as you. Do you tell them lots of stories like you

do with me? I love your stories Matilda.

MISS HONEY Bye Mrs. Phelps, see you next week. MRS. PHELPS Oh, bye Miss

Honey and good luck with the Tolstoy.

MATILDA Who was that? MRS. PHELPS Ah, that lady. That was Miss Honey. She is going to be your teacher.

MATILDA That lady. That lady's my teach... MRS. PHELPS Yes, yes, yes your teacher. MRS.

PHELPS Oh well, your mother must be waiting for you. Is she here? I would to meet her actually... MATILDA Goodbye Mrs. Phelps. See you tomorrow! MRS.

PHELPS Ooh, after your first day at school! [Exit MRS. PHELPS and MATILDA)

(In the school yard) T-Bull You, detention. You're too small. Grow up quicker.

Heads up. Shoulders back. Stomachs in. Stand up straight. Lavender: Hey!

Matilda: Sorry.

Lavender: That's okay. It's much better than being out there. Matilda: Is that my teacher? Lavender: No. That's the principle, Miss Trunchbull. Matilda: You've got to be kidding! Hortensia: You squirts better skedaddle. I'm not kidding.

The Trunchbull likes to crack her whip in there to see who's trying to hide. T-

Bull: Change those socks! Too pink! Matilda: I'm Matilda. Lavender:

Lavender. Hortensia: I'm Hortensia.

Matilda: She doesn't really hit children with that yard stick, does she?

Hortensia: No. It's mostly for scare. What she does is worse. Like yesterday, in the second grade, the Trunchbull makes a weekly visit to every classroom, to show the teachers a thing or two about handling kids. She caught Julius eating two M in her lesson. Matilda: And she caught him? Hortensia: Of

course! Matilda: Was Julius okay? Hortensia: After being thrown out the window, of course, he wasn't okay.

He lived, if that's what you mean. Lavender: The Trunchbull used to be in the Olympics: Shot put, javelin, hammerthrow. The hammerthrow was her specialty. Matilda: So she does this all the time? Hortensia: Better than being put in "The Chokey". Matilda: The Chokey? Hortensia: Yeah, The Chokey.

It's a tall, narrow, hole in a wall behind a door. You have to stand in the drippy pipes with jagged edges, and the walls have broken glass with nails sticking out. T-Bull: Get out of sight, you festering ball of pus! Matilda: She puts kids in there? Hortensia: I've been in there twice. Sometimes she leaves you in there all day.

Matilda: Didn't you tell your parents? Hortensia: They didn't believe me. I mean, would your parents believe it?!? T-Bull: Sixty lines – "I must obey Miss Trunchbull." Out of my way! Matilda: Here she comes. T-Bull: Quiet! Get to class before I throw you all in the Chokey. SONG: SCHOOL KIDS
HORTENSIA And so you think you're able To survive this mess by being a prince or a princess.

You will soon see there's no escaping tragedy. And even if you put in heaps of effort, You're just wasting energy, 'Cause your life as you know it is ancient history. I have suffered in this jail. Have been trapped inside this cage for ages, This living 'ell.

But if I try I can remember, Back before my life had ended, Before my happy days were over, Before I first heard the pealing of the bell. OLDER KIDS Like

you, I was curious, So innocent I asked a thousand questions. But unless you want to suffer, listen up And I will teach you a thing or two. You listen here, my dear, You'll be punished so severely if you step out of line. And if you cry it will be double. You should stay out of trouble And remember to be extremely careful.

NIGEL Why? BIG KIDS Why? HORTENSIA Why? Did you hear what he said?
BIG KIDS Just you wait for phys-ed! CHILDREN What's phys-ed? BIG KIDS
Physical education! BHORTENSIA It's the Trunchbull's speciality. The
CHILDREN reach out from behind the gate as the BIG KIDS carry them away.
ALICE My mummy says I'm a miracle. Ahh! BRUCE My daddy says I would be
the teacher's pet! Ahh! LAVENDER School is really fun, according to my
mum. Ahh! AMANDA and ERIC Dad said I'd learn the alphabet! HORTENSIA
The alphabet? You've gotta learn to listen up, kid.

Two BIG KIDS start climbing on the gate, flanking alphabet blocks as they are
are pushed through the gate when they are mentioned in the song. OLDER
KIDS And so you think you're A-ble To survive this mess by Being a prince or
a princess. You will soon (C) see there's no escaping trageDy. And Even if
you put in heaps of eFfort, You're just wasting enerGy, Cause your life as you
know it is " aitch"-ent history. I have suffered in this Jail, I've been trapped
inside this (K) cage for ages, This living ' eLI.

But if I try I can remeMber, Back before my life had eNded, Before my happy
days were Over, Before I first heard the Pealing of the bell. Like you, I was
(Q) curious, So innocent I (R) asked a thousand questions, But unleSs you
want to suffer, listen up And I will Teach you a thing or two. YoU listen here,

my dear, You'll be punished so severely if you step out of line. And if you cry it will be (W) double.

You should stay out of trouble, And remember to be extremely careful. ERIC Why? BIG KIDS Why? HORTENSIA Why? Why? Did you hear what we said? The gate rolls away. Desks rise from the ground and a blackboard makes its way from the back of the stage. Upon the blackboard is written the alphabet.

BIG KIDS Just you wait for phys-ed! Just you wait for phys-ed. BIG KIDS and CHILDREN A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X. CHILDREN Why, why, why, why, why, why, why? A spotlight makes its way across the letters on the board, finally settling at the end on the letter Z. HORTENSIA Just you wait for phy-Zed! SCENE SEVEN The classroom. Miss Honey is addressing the children.

] MISS HONEY Good morning everyone! My name's Miss Honey, and today is a very special day. You're first day of school. Now do any of you know your two times table? [MATILDA raises her hand] Matilda isn't it? Please stand and do as much as you can MATILDA One times two is two Two times two is four Three times two is six Four times two is eight Five times two is ten Six times two is twelve Seven times two is fourteen Eight times two is sixteen Nine times two is eighteen Ten times two is twenty Eleven times two is twenty-two Twelve times two is twenty-four MISS HONEY Oh my word! That's... MATILDA Thirteen times two is twenty-six Fourteen times two is twenty-eight Fifteen times two is thirty Sixteen times two is... MISS HONEY Stop stop. Good heavens! How far can you go? MATILDA I don't know, quite a long way I think.

MISS HONEY Do you think you can tell me what two times twenty-eight is?
MATILDA Fifty-six. [Other children look from MATILDA to MISS HONEY in shock]
MISS HONEY Yes, that is... how about this? This is much harder so don't worry if you don't get it. Two times four hundred and eighty seven. If you took your time do you think...
MATILDA Nine hundred and seventy four
Other children look from MATILDA to MISS HONEY in shock] MISS HONEY Twelve sevens?
MATILDA Eighty-four No way!
SCHOOL CHILDREN [SCHOOL CHILDREN start to talk among themselves].
MISS HONEY Lets let that rest for the time being and look at reading.

Now can anyone read this: NIGEL I can! Pick me me me me me me me me me me!
MISS HONEY Ok ok, Nigel. [NIGEL scares at board but can't read so tenses up]
NIGEL Aahhhhhhhhhhhhh! MISS HONEY Oh yes, yes, I think we'd better leave it there now. We don't want to burst a blood vessel. [LAVENDER puts her hand up]
LAVENDER Is the first word... tomato?
MISS HONEY No. But tomato is a very good word. Matilda?
MATILDA I can now read words.

MISS HONEY So Matilda, you can read words. MATILDA Yes, well I needed to learn to read words to read sentences because basically a sentence is a big bunch of words. And if you can't read sentences, you've got no chance of reading books.
MISS HONEY And... have you read a whole book yourself
Matilda?
MATILDA Oh yes more than one. I love books. Last week I read quite a few.

MISS HONEY A few? In a week? My, my that is good. What books did you read?
MATILDA Nicholas Nickleby, Oliver Twist, Jane Erye Lord of the Rings, The Invisible Man, The Secret Garden, Crime and Punishment, and... School

bell rings and exit ALL] SCENE EIGHT [Outside MISS TRUNCHBULL'S office.

Enter MISS HONEY.] 5: PATHETIC MISS HONEY KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY.
JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

DON'T BE PATHETIC. KNOCK ON THE DOOR, JENNY. THERE'S NOTHING TO
FEAR. YOU'RE BEING PATHETIC.

IT'S JUST A DOOR. YOU'VE SEEN ONE BEFORE. JUST KNOCK ON THE DOOR.
LOOK AT YOU TRYING TO HIDE, SILLY.

STANDING OUTSIDE THE PRINCIPLE'S OFFICE LIKE A LITTLE GIRL. IT'S JUST
PATHETIC. OHH..

. [The sound of knocking) Enter. MISS TRUNCHBULL [Long pause] Don't just
stand there like a wet tissue. Get on with it! [Miss Honey enters] MISS
HONEY Yes, yes, yes, Miss Trunchbull. There's... umm... in my class that is...
there is a little girl called Matilda Wormwood. MISS TRUNCHBULL Daughter of
Mr Harry Wormwood, owner of Wormwood motors.

Excellent man. He told me to watch out for the brat though, says she's a real
wart. MISS HONEY No headmistress, I don't think Matilda is that kind of child
at all! MISS TRUNCHBULL What is the school motto Miss Honey? MISS HONEY
Babinatum est magitum. MISS TRUNCHBULL Babinatum est Magitum! –
Children are maggots. It must have been her who put that stink bomb under
my desk this morning.

I'll have her for that. Thank you for suggesting it MISS HONEY But I didn't...

Miss Trunchbull, Matilda Wormwood is a genius! MISS TRUNCHBULL

Nonsense, Jenny! I just told you she is a gangster. MISS HONEY She knows her times tables. MISS TRUNCHBULL She's learnt a few tricks.

MISS HONEY But she can read! MISS TRUNCHBULL So can I. MISS HONEY I have to tell you headmistress. In my opinion, this little girl should be placed in the top form with the eleven year olds. MISS TRUNCHBULL She is a squib, a shrimp, an un-hatched tadpole.

I cannot simply place her in the top form with the eleven year olds. What kind of society would that be? What about rules Miss Honey? Rules. MISS HONEY I believe that Matilda Wormwood is an exception to the rules. MISS TRUNCHBULL An exception...? To the rules...? In my school... SONG: THE HAMMER Look at these trophies.

See how my trophies gleam in the sunlight? See how they shine? What do you think it took to become English Hammer Throwing Champion 1969? [She stands and approaches MISS HONEY menacingly, towering over her.] Do you think in that moment, when my big moment came, That I treated the rules with casual disdain? Well? Like hell! As I stepped up to the circle, did I change my plan? Hm? What? As I chalked up my palms, did I wave my hands? I did not! As I started my spin, did I look at the view? Did I drift off and dream for a minute or two? Do you think I faltered or amended my rotation? Do you think I altered my intended elevation? As the hammer took off, did I change my grunt From the grunt I had practiced for many a month? Not a jot! Not a dot did I stray from the plot. Not a detail of my throw was adjusted or forgotten. Not even when the hammer left my hands And sailed high up, up above the stands Did I let myself go.

No, no, no, no [ad lib.] [She turns and walks back to her desk. She daintily reaches up and captures a figurine of a woman throwing the hammer. If you want to throw the hammer for your country, You have to stay inside the circle all the time. [She murmurs along to the music.] And if you want to make the team, You don't need happiness or self-esteem.

You just need to keep your feet inside the line. [She presses an intercom on her desk.] Sing, children. Two, three, four.

CHILDREN and BIG KIDS appear in the boxes to the upper left and upper right of the stage and sing. MISS TRUNCHBULL and CHILDREN If you want to throw the hammer for your country. BIG KIDS Bambinatum est magitum. MISS TRUNCHBULL and CHILDREN You have to stay inside the circle –MISS TRUNCHBULL – all the time. BIG KIDS Circulum, maggitum, maggitum.

MISS TRUNCHBULL And if you want to teach success, You don't use sympathy or tenderness. CHILDREN and BIG KIDS Tenderness. MISS TRUNCHBULL You have to force the little squits to toe the line! [She grabs a baton with a yellow ribbon attached to it and starts twirling to the music.] Sing, Jenny! Two, three, four! MISS HONEY, BIG KIDS, and CHILDREN If you want to throw the hammer for your country, BIG KIDS Bambinatum! Bambinatum! Gloria Magitum! MISS HONEY, BIG KIDS, and CHILDREN You have to stay inside the circle all the time.

BIG KIDSCirculum est Deus! Deus! MISS TRUNCHBULL Apply just one simple rule To hammer throwing, life, and school – Life's a ball, so learn to throw it, Find the bally line and toe it, And always keep your feet inside the line! [She throws the baton across the stage, does a jete to catch it, and points her

finger at MISS HONEY.] Now get out. MISS HONEY I have to tell you, headmistress, that it is my intention to help this little girl. W... w... whether you like it or not. SCENE NINE [The Wormwoods' living room.

] MR WORMWOOD Stupid, stinking, slimey, smelly, great big question-asking... How dare they talk like that to me? Who the hell do they think they are? Filthy... flippin... nasty, stupid Russians... MRS WORMWOOD Ohhh... don't tell me we're not rich... MR WORMWOOD It's the mileage... They took one look at the mileage on the first car, and they said " these cars are knackered".

I told ' em - I said the reason the mileage is so high is a manufacturing mistake. MATILDA Is that true? MR WORMWOOD Course it's not true... MATILDA So you lied? MR WORMWOOD Course I lied. MATILDA And they didn't believe you? MR WORMWOOD Of course they didn't believe me... I'VE GOT GREEN HAIR! MICHAEL I've got hair... MR WORMWOOD Oh... what's that... another stinking book? WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE TELLY? MRS WORMWOOD She's got no respect, that one. It's all books and stories. MATILDA But that was a lovely book... honestly if you wanted to-... [Mr Wormwood walks over, cutting Matilda short.] MR WORMWOOD Lovely, is it? Yeah? Here's what I think of your lovely... BOOK! [He snatches it out of her hands, and begins attempting to tear the whole book in half with his bare hands.

] MATILDA No! No! You can't... it's a library book! MRS WORMWOOD Go on! Show the little brat! [The parents continue to laugh sadistically, as Mr Wormwood struggles to make any impact on the book at all. Eventually, he

gives up, opens the book, and begins to cruelly tear out individual pages, flinging them down at the floor in a fit of rage, one by one.] MR WORMWOOD Now get out of here, you litte stinkworm. [As Matilda silently stands, in shock, Mr Wormwood swings round and begins to tickle a hysterical Michael, his mood instantly transformed.] MATILDA Do we have any superglue? MR WORMWOOD In the cupboard. [Pause as Matilda exits]... ‘ Ere... while you’re at it... Why don’t you stick that stupid book to your stupid head!?’ [Mr & Mrs Wormwood burst into hysterical laughter.

Matilda re-enters with superglue. All but Matilda exit. There is now a hat stand on stage, with Mr Wormwood’s hat on top.] Mr Wormwood enters. Matilda hides the superglue behind her back, and offers her father his hat. He takes it suspiciously, but puts it on.

MR WORMWOOD I’ve got my eye on you, boy... Blackout. MATILDA I’m a girl!

SCENE TEN [The schoolyard. Chaos – paper airplanes flying everywhere, children running and screaming. Matilda is approached by Lavender.

] LAVENDER Matilda? Can I ask you a question? Do all those brains in your head give you a headache? I mean... it’s GOT to hurt... all squished in there... MATILDA No... no it’s fine... I think they just... fit. LAVENDER Right. Well look – I’d better hang around, just in case... If they start to squeeze out of your ears, you’re going to need help! I’m Lavender, and I think it’s probably for the best if we’re best friends! [Suddenly, we hear a long scream that gets louder and louder and louder until Nigel runs in.] NIGEL

Aaaaaahhhhhhhh... Help me! Someone poured a whole can of treacle onto the Trunchbull’s chair... she sat down, and when she got up, her knickers

stayed stuck to the seat! Someone told them I did it... But I never... and now she's after me... MATILDA That's not fair! That's not fair at all! HORTENSIA You're done, kid. You're finished. The moment the Trunchbull decides who's guilty... You're squished! NIGEL But Matilda... they're saying that she's going to put me in CHOKEY! 8: CHOKEY CHANT [A flash of lightening and a loud clap of thunder, as the music suddenly bursts out.

] MATILDA What's chokey...? NIGEL They say it's a cupboard in her office that she throws children into... They say she's lined it with nails, and spikes, and bits of broken glass... HORTENSIA THERE'S A PLACE YOU ARE SENT IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GOOD, AND IT'S MADE OF SPIKES AND WOOD, AND IT ISN'T WIDE ENOUGH TO SIT, AND EVEN IF YOU COULD, THERE ARE NAILS ON THE BOTTOM SO YOU'LL WISH YOU STOOD! WHEN THE HINGES CREAK! AND THE DOOR IS CLOSED, YOU CANNOT SEE SQUAT, NOT THE END OF YOUR NOSE, WHEN YOU SCREAM YOU DON'T KNOW IF THE SOUND CAME OUT, OR IF THE SCREAM IN YOUR HEAD EVEN REACHED YOUR MOUTH! MATILDA Alright, look; when did this happen? NIGEL Twenty minutes ago. But why? [A loud whistle is blown.] NIGEL Oh no! She's coming! MATILDA You need to hide! Quick – the blazers! [Nigel lies down on the stage, and Matilda buries him under a pile of school blazers. Miss Trunchbull enters, blowing her whistle repeatedly, in a ridiculous manner.] MISS TRUNCHBULL Where is the maggot known as Nigel? MATILDA He's... over there... under those coats... Well he's been for the last hour, actually... MISS TRUNCHBULL What? An hour? MATILDA Oh yes... you see... unfortunately, Nigel suffers from the rare but chronic sleep disorder, narcolepsy. The condition is characterised by the

sufferer experiencing bouts of chronic fatigue, and suddenly falling asleep, often with very little warning at all.

You see, Nigel fell asleep so we put him in the coats for safety, didn't we? [All the children simply stare at her, gobsmacked.] DIDN'T WE? [They all suddenly snap out of their state, and nod and murmur in agreement.]

HORTENSIA Snugglilopsy...MATILDA He'll probably think he's in bed when he WAKES UP! [Nigel suddenly springs to life from under the coats, pantomiming exhaustion.] NIGEL [Yawning] AAaaawhhhh! Is it time for school yet, mum? [Opening his eyes] What am I doing here? This isn't my room at all! Oh! Hello, Miss Trunchbull! [Miss Trunchbull stares furiously at Nigel, steaming, but suddenly spins round and points at Amanda in the crowd of children.] MISS TRUNCHBULL Amanda Thripp... AMANDA Yes, Miss Trunchbull? MISS TRUNCHBULL What did I tell you about wearing pigtails? I HATE PIGTAILS! AMANDA But mummy likes them... she says they make me look pretty...MISS TRUNCHBULL Well your mummy... IS A TWIT! [Miss Trunchbull finally approaches Matilda.] MISS TRUNCHBULL What is your name? MATILDA Matilda. Matilda Wormwood. MISS TRUNCHBULL Oh so you're Wormwood, are you? I might've known... Well Matilda Wormwood... You've just made a very big mistake. [She looks as though she is about to announce a punishment, but instead just stands there awkwardly before marching off.] LAVENDER Just so you all know... SHE'S MY BEST FRIEND!!

SCENE ELEVEN [Mr Wormwood's second hand car company. Enter MR WORMWOOD and a mechanic.] MR WORMWOOD [On the phone] Brand new stock, sir! Yeah! Completely different set of cars! Green hair? Er... er... OH! It was National Green Hair Day, sir! A celebration of all the wonderful green

things in the world! Like... lettuce! And... umm... snot! Tomorrow at one?
Absolutely, sir! Wonders! Dos-nee-doo-dah! Bye-bye now! [He puts the phone down.] Now THAT is how you do business. [He laughs loudly to himself, and attempts to pull off his hat. It is stuck. He continues to attempt in various Ad Lib comic ways, before finally giving up.] I'm gonna keep this on... looks like rain... [Exit MR. WORMWOOD.] SCENE TWELVE [The Wormwood's house. Miss Honey knocks on the door. Inside, Mrs Wormwood and Rudolpho are preparing to dance. MRS WORMWOOD Who is it? MISS HONEY Oh... er... Hello? It's Miss Honey... Matilda's teacher... MRS WORMWOOD We're busy right now... MISS HONEY It'll only take a moment... MRS WORMWOOD Eugh... alright then. Come in if you must. MRS WORMWOOD What do you want, Miss Chutney? MISS HONEY It's Miss Honey... um, well, as you know, Matilda is in the bottom class and children in the bottom class aren't really expected to read... MRS WORMWOOD Well stop her reading then! Lord knows we've tried... MRS WORMWOOD I'm not in favour of girls getting all... cleverpants, Miss Hussy... Girls should think about makeup and hairdye! Looks are more important than books! I mean... look at you, and look at me! You chose books, I chose looks! MISS HONEY I beg your pardon...? MISS HONEY But Matilda can calculate complicated figures in her head in an instant! MISS HONEY But her mind... with a little help from us, she can... MRS WORMWOOD Mind? Her MIND? [She bursts into laughter.] You really don't know anything, do you!? LOUD: SONG Somewhere along the way, my dear, You've made an awful error. You oughtn't blame yourself now, come along. You seem to think that people like people what are clever. It's very quaint, it's very sweet, But wrong. People don't like smarty-pants what go 'round Claiming that they know stuff we don't know. Now, here's a tip:

What you know matters less Than the volume with which what you don't know's expressed. Content has never been less important, so You have got to be LOUD! Girl, you've gotta learn to stand up and stick out from the Crowd! A little less flat, a lot more heel. A little less fact, a lot more feel. A little less brains, a lot more hair. A little less head, a lot more derriere.

RUDOLPHO starts dancing with and around MISS HONEY, which he continues to do throughout the song. MISS HONEY, dazed, follows the dance as best she can. MRS WORMWOOD No one's gonna tell you when to shake your tush. Well, you got a light. Don't hide it under a bushel. No one's going to look if you don't stand out. No one's going to listen if you don't shout. No one's gonna care if you don't care, So go and put some highlights in your hair. ' Cause you've gotta highlight what you got. Even if what you got is not a lot. You gotta be loud! You gotta give yourself permission to shine. To stand up and be proud! Whee! A little less zzz, a lot more zing. A little less shh, a lot more schwing. A little less dressing like your mum. A little more bah-da, ba ba ba-da bom! [She takes a mirror from the armchair. Oh, I look nice. [to MISS HONEY] You don't! No one's gonna tell you when to wiggle your bumba.

RUDOLPHO No one's gonna love you if you don't know the rumba. MRS WORMWOOD Everybody loves a little something exotic. RUDOLPHO But learning a language is over the top – MRS WORMWOOD It doesn't really matter if you don't know much! RUDOLPHO As long as you don't know it with the volume up. MRS WORMWOOD puts a number on RUDOLPHO's back as though they are competing in a dancing competition. MRS WORMWOOD and RUDOLPHO The less you have to sell, the harder you sell it. The less you have to say, the louder you yell it. The dumber the act, the bigger the confession. The less you have to show, the louder you dress it. MRS

WORMWOOD and RUDOLPHO You gotta get up! You gotta get up and be loud! JUDGE Your judges! Two other dancing teams come in and join MRS WORMWOOD and RUDOLPHO in the competition. They dance to the same routine until MRS WORMWOOD and RUDOLPHO overtake them with some bad choreography. MRS WORMWOOD I'm the best! I'm the best! I'm the best! Three judges hold up signs reading " 10" as MRS WORMWOOD sits on the table. She holds up the final " 10". MRS WORMWOOD Ten! Of course! I mean, what else? You gotta be loud! Stand out from the crowd! Are you listening? You gotta be loud! Stand up and be proud! BACKGROUND SINGERS Loud, loud, loud, loud! Loud, loud, loud, loud! Loud, loud, loud, loud! MRS WORMWOOD You gotta be loud! The other dancers and judges exit, leaving MRS WORMWOOD and RUDOLPHO in a dramatic position. They then saunter off. MISS HONEY is left in a pile stage right. SONG: LITTLE GIRL MISS HONEY Stop being pathetic, Jenny. Just get on your feet, Jenny. You are going to march in there and give them a piece of your mind. Leave it alone, Jenny. The more that you try, The more you'll just look like a fool. This it not your problem. You've not got the spine. You are a teacher. Just go back to school! But this little girl . . . This miracle . . . She seems not to know that she's special at all. And what sort of teacher would I be If I let this little girl fall? I can see This little girl needs somebody strong to fight by her side. Instead, she's found me. Pathetic, little me. And another door closes. And Jenny's outside. MISS HONEY exits behind the stacks as the library scene rolls in. MRS PHELPS is sitting on a block and MATILDA is standing on one, holding the two dolls. [The classroom. MISS HONEY Matilda? Can I speak to you for a second? I'm afraid I've not been too successful in getting others to recognise your... abilities. So... starting tomorrow, I shall bring a collection of very

clever books that will challenge your mind. You may sit and read while I teach the others, and... well... if you have any questions, I shall do my best to answer them. How does that sound? [Instead of answering, Matilda holds Miss Honey's gaze before running up and hugging her very tightly.] MISS HONEY Matilda... That is the biggest hug in the world. You're going to knock all the air out of me! [Suddenly, Miss Trunchbull enters.] MISS TRUNCHBULL Matilda Wormwood! MATILDA WORMWOOD? MATILDA [Terrified] Yes, Miss Trunchbull? MISS TRUNCHBULL So you admit it, do you? MATILDA Admit what, Miss Trunchbull? MISS TRUNCHBULL This clot. This foul carbuncle is none other than a disgusting criminal! The nemesis of the underworld! [Bruce suddenly appears very guilty and puts his hand over his mouth in shock.] This worm slid like a serpent into kitchen, and stole a slice of my private chocolate cake from my tea tray! MATILDA No I did not! MISS HONEY Miss Trunchbull... Matilda's been here all morning... MISS TRUNCHBULL Standing up for the little spitball, are you? Well this crime took place before school started. THEREFORE, SHE IS GUILTY. [All onstage freeze, apart from Bruce who addresses the audience.] BRUCE Ok - look, alright - I stole the cake! And honestly - I was really definitely sort of almost thinking about owning up! Well... maybe... But the thing was, I was having a lot of trouble with my belly. You see - the Trunchbull's cake was SO GOOD, that I scoffed it down too quick. And now it was beginning to fight back... [His stomach rumbles loudly.] BRUCE Oops... see? [Everyone unfreezes and the scene continues.] MATILDA I'm not guilty! I didn't do anything! MISS TRUNCHBULL Nonsense, you are a fiend. You are a crook. You are a THIEF. And I shall crush you. You shall be... You shall be destroyed. [As Miss Trunchbull smells the chocolate on his breath, she descends upon Bruce menacingly.] 12:

BRUCE MISS TRUNCHBULL Bruce Bogtrotter... BRUCE Yes, Miss? MISS TRUNCHBULL You liked my cake, didn't you Bruce. BRUCE Yes Miss Trunchbull. And I'm very sorry that...- MISS TRUNCHBULL Oh no, no, no, no... as long as you enjoyed the cake. That's the main thing. BRUCE Is it? MISS TRUNCHBULL Yes, Bogtrotter. It is. BRUCE Oh. Well... I did... thank you... MISS TRUNCHBULL Wonderful. Marvellous. That makes me so happy. It gives me a warm glow in my lower intestine. Oh, Cook? COOK hobbles in, carrying a massive chocolate cake on a tray.] MISS TRUNCHBULL What's the matter, Bogtrotter? Lost your appetite? BRUCE Well... yes... I'm full... MISS TRUNCHBULL Oh no, you are not full. I'll tell you when you are full, and I say that criminals like you are not full until you have eaten the entire cake. BRUCE But- MISS TRUNCHBULL No buts! You haven't got time for but. EAT! BRUCE But I can't eat it all... MISS HONEY Headmistress, he'll be sick... MISS TRUNCHBULL He should've thought of that before he made a pact with Satan and decided to steal my cake! EAT! Hortensia HE CAN'T! MISS TRUNCHBULL EAT! CHILDREN HE SURELY CAN'T! MISS TRUNCHBULL EAT! HORTENSIA HE MIGHT EXPLODE! MISS TRUNCHBULL EAT! CONSIDER A SLICE. CHILDREN OOOOOH! STUFF IT IN. BRUCE! YOU'RE ALMOST FINISHED. BRUCE! YOU'LL FIT IT IN. WHATEVER YOU DO, JUST DON'T GIVE IN. BRUCE! DON'T LET HER WIN! BRUCE! HORTENSIA COME ON, BRUCE, BE OUR HERO. COVER YOURSELF IN CHOCOLATE GLORY. MATILDA Go on Bruce! Do it... MISS TRUNCHBULL Silence! MISS HONEY GO ON BRUCIE!!! [A long pause as everyone stares at the hysterical Miss Honey who suddenly composes herself.] MISS HONEY Sorry... Miss Trunchbull... I got carried away... MISS TRUNCHBULL That's alright Jenny. We all get carried away sometimes. Even me. Very long pause as Miss Trunchbull tries to understand what just

happened.] MISS TRUNCHBULL Well done, Bogtrotter. Good show. [Miss Trunchbull goes to exit, but stops.] MISS TRUNCHBULL Come, Bogtrotter... BRUCE What? Where...? MISS TRUNCHBULL Oh did I not mention? That was only the first part of your punishment. There's more: the second part. And the second part is CHOKEY. MISS HONEY No! Miss Trunchbull... please... you can't... MISS TRUNCHBULL [Imitating her] Miss Trunchbull... please... you CAN! Do you think I'm going to allow myself to be defeated by these maggots? Do you? Who do you think I am, Miss Honey? A weakling? An idiot? A shrew!? Grabbing Bruce] YOU! MISS HONEY But he ate it all... he did what you asked! BRUCE But I ate the lot! I did it! Nooooo!!!! [He is dragged off to CHOKEY by Miss Trunchbull.] MATILDA THAT'S NOT RIGHT! (BLACKOUT).

ACT TWO [Enter MR. WORMWOOD] ACT II SCENE ONE SONG: TELLY MR WORMWOOD Somewhere, on a show, I heard That a picture tells a thousand words. So, telly, if you bothered to take a look, Is the equivalent of, like . . . lots of books! Every time the word " telly" is mentioned in the following verses, MICHAEL yells the word along with his father. MR WORMWOOD All I know, I learnt from telly. This big beautiful box of facts. If you know a thing already, Baby, you can switch the channel over just like that. Endless joy and endless laughter. Folks living happily ever after. All you need to make you wise Is twenty-three minutes plus advertisements. Why would we waste our energy Turning the pages, one, two, three? When we can sit comfortably, On our lovely bumferlies, Watching people singing, and talking, and doing stuff? All I know, I learnt from telly. The bigger the telly, the smarter the man. You can tell from my big telly Just how clever of a fellow I am! Take it away, son. MICHAEL steps forward, and after some consideration, plucks a note on his ukulele. After a pause, he looks down and plucks another doleful note. MR

WORMWOOD You can't learn that from a stupid book, [audience member's name]! All I know, I learnt from telly. What to think and what to buy. I was pretty smart already, But now I'm really, really smart, very very smart. Endless content, endless channels, Endless chat on endless panels. All you need to fill your muffin, Without having to really fink or nuffin. Why would we waste our energy Trying to work out " ooh"-lysses? When we can sit happily on our lovely bapperlies Watching slightly famous people talking to really famous people? All I know I learnt from telly. The bigger the telly, the smarter the man. You can tell from my big telly Just how clever of a fellow I am. MICHAEL runs out and grabs a giant trash can. MR WORMWOOD walks over to a small book cart and starts throwing books over his shoulder, and MICHAEL catches them in the trash can. MR WORMWOOD Who the Dickens is Charles Dickens? Mary Shelley? Cor, she sounds smelly. Charlotte Bronte? Do not want-y! Jane Austin? In the compostin'. James Joyce? He doesn't sound noice. Ewen McEwan? Ugh, I feel like spewin'. William Shakespeare? Schwilliam Schmakespeare. Moby Dick? [He titters.] Easy, grandma! All together, now!